DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 465 420 PS 030 199

TITLE	A Guide for Parents and Families about What Your 7th Grader Should Be Learning in School This Year. Don't Fail Your Children.
INSTITUTION	South Carolina State Education Oversight Committee, Columbia.; South Carolina State Dept. of Education, Columbia.
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	8p.; For related documents in the "Don't Fail Your Children" series, see PS 030 192-204.
AVAILABLE FROM	South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, 1105 Pendleton Street, Suite 227, Blatt Building, Columbia, SC 29201. Tel: 803-734-6148. For full text: http://www.state.sc.us/eoc.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary School Curriculum; English; *Grade 7; Junior High Schools; Language Arts; Mathematics; *Outcomes of Education; Parent Materials; Resource Materials; Sciences; Social Studies; State Curriculum Guides; *State Standards; World Wide Web
IDENTIFIERS	*Curriculum Standards; *South Carolina

ABSTRACT

This guide shares information about the South Carolina Curriculum Standards with parents. The standards outline state requirements for children's learning, and what students across the state should be able to do in certain subjects. The guide lists seven key reasons for parents to be aware of the new curriculum standards, and then presents a condensed version of the standards for seventh grade in mathematics (numbers and operation, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability), English/language arts (reading/literature, listening, speaking, writing, research), science (inquiry and process skills, life science, earth science, physical science), and social studies (history: time, continuity, and change; government/political science: power, authority, and governance; geography: people, places, and environments; economics: production, distribution, and consumption). Listed after the standards for each subject area are sample assessment questions for parents to complete with their children, selected book titles for additional reading, and Web site addresses for extended learning. (EV)

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A Guide for Parents and Families about What Your 7th Grader Should Be Learning in School This Year. Don't Fail Your Children.

South Carolina Department of Education,
South Carolina Education Oversight Committee

Fall 2001

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PS 030 199

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DON'T FAIL YOUR CHILDREN

A Guide for Parents and Families About What Your 7th Grader Should Be Learning in School This Year

It's no longer a secret...

This guide shares important information about the South Carolina Curriculum Standards. These standards outline state requirements for your child's learning program and what students across the state should be able to do in certain subjects.

A good educational system provides many tools that help children learn. Curriculum standards are useful for making sure:

- teachers know what is to be taught;
- children know what is to be learned; and
- parents and the public can determine how well the standards are being learned at each grade level.

The student standards that follow are a condensed version of the South Carolina Curriculum Standards for Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science and Social Studies for **7th Grade**. They are provided to help you become familiar with what your child is expected to do at the end of **7th Grade** so that you can reinforce and support what your child is learning at school. Listed after the standards for each subject area are sample assessment questions for you to complete with your child, selected book titles for additional reading and website addresses for extended learning. This version does not include every standard taught in **7th Grade**. If you are interested in the complete South Carolina Curriculum Standards, check with your child's teacher.

Before moving on to the next grade, students in grades 3 to 8 will be expected to score at or above grade level on state-developed tests – Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests (PACT) – that test student knowledge of the South Carolina Curriculum Standards.

South Carolina Curriculum Standards.
Here are seven key reasons parents should be in the **know** about the new curriculum standards:

1. Standards set clear, high expectations for student achievement. Standards tell what students need to do in order to progress through school on grade level.
2. Standards guide efforts to measure student achievement. Results of tests (PACT) on grade-level curriculum standards show if students have learned and teachers have taught for mastery.
3. Standards promote educational equity for all. Instruction in every school in the state will be based on the same curriculum standards.
4. Standards help parents to know if their child is being taught the same subject content as children across the nation. South Carolina Curriculum Standards have been matched and compared with standards of other states to make sure that they are challenging.
5. Standards help parents to know more about the academic progress of their child and provide assistance at home in areas where the children need help. Parents no longer have to guess the type of help their children need to do better in school. Standards give parents more specific information for helping their children at home.
6. Standards help parents to participate more actively in parent/teacher conferences. Knowledge of the curriculum standards helps parents understand more about what their children are learning and what they can do at each grade level. Parents are able to have conversations with teachers about student progress in specific areas and understand more completely the progress of their children.
7. Standards help parents to understand that what their children learn in school one year ties into what they will learn in the next year and in future years. Parents are able to see how their child's knowledge is growing from one year to the next.

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MATHEMATICS

Students will be able to:

Numbers and Operation

- Explain the reasoning used for creating and writing ratios and proportions for real-world situations.
- Use pictures, diagrams and numbers to develop an algorithm (method) for solving problems with positive and negative integers (numbers).
- Use pictures, diagrams and numbers to examine several methods of solving problems with positive and negative integers (numbers) in order to choose the best method.
- Add, subtract, multiply and divide positive and negative integers (numbers) to solve real-world problems.

Algebra

- Use graphs, tables and equations to solve practical problems involving tips, discounts, sales tax and simple interest.

Geometry

- Describe the changes in the volume of a prism (box) when its edge lengths are varied.
- Compare and contrast characteristics of same shape, different size (similar) figures and same shape, same size (congruent) figures.
- State the relationships among the coordinates of the vertices (corners) of four-sided figures in a coordinate plane to examine whether sides are parallel or perpendicular.
- Draw two-dimensional objects from a given geometric description.
- Write a description of geometric properties for a given object.

Measurement

- Use circumference and area to solve real-world problems.
- Describe the change in the volume of a prism (box, pyramid and cylinder) when the area of the base is changed.
- Determine the unit rate of measurement.

Data Analysis and Probability

- Describe the relationship between a data set and its corresponding graph.
- Determine the probability (likelihood) that an independent event will occur.

Sample PACT Question

An auto mechanic earns $14.75 per hour for a 40-hour week. She pays 16% of her earnings in taxes and 7.7% for Social Security. What is her net (take-home) pay for the week?

Answer

$450.17

Activities:

Have your child:

- Calculate the final price or the percent savings in newspaper sales advertisements or while shopping.
- Calculate the tip and/or sales tax for a service provided or an item purchased.
- Estimate the total cost for items purchased and the change expected when using a $20, $50 or $100 bill.
- Calculate the best buy based on the unit price for similar items.
- Investigate the patterns behind secret codes and cryptography (code breaking).
- Play "Tetris" or a similar video game and discuss the slides, turns and flips of each piece.
- Talk with your child's teacher about other activities that would support the mathematical skills and concepts he or she will be learning this year.

Books:

- *Algebra To Go* (published by Great Source Education Group; 1-800-289-4490).
- *Geometry To Go* (published by Great Source Education Group; 1-800-289-4490).
- *Math On Call: A Mathematics Handbook* (published by Great Source Education Group; 1-800-289-4490).
- *Math To Know: A Mathematics Handbook* (published by Great Source Education Group; 1-800-289-4490).

Websites:

- www.myscschools.com – Web site where parents can view all the curriculum standards.
- www.illuminations.nctm.org – Click on "I-Math Investigations" for interactive learning.
- www.figurethis.org – This site has fun and engaging mathematics questions for children.

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

Students should be able to:

Reading/Literature

- Increase vocabulary through use of skills learned previously and through reading increasingly difficult books and selections.
- Use various techniques such as skimming and scanning to read many types of printed materials for different purposes.
- Read and analyze works of fiction, nonfiction and poetry.
- Read all kinds of information critically, including technical and career-related materials.
- Recognize the difference between fact and opinion.
- Tell how information from different sources is alike and different.
- Understand various viewpoints when reading.
- Make predictions and read to see if they are correct.
- Summarize what he/she has read.
- Identify and separate main ideas from less important ideas and details in a selection.
- Select materials and read independently for extended periods of time.

Listening

- Identify verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
- Listen, talk and/or write about books read aloud, audiotapes and discussions.
- Build his/her vocabulary through listening experiences.
- Identify persuasive techniques in the media.
- Tell the difference between fact and opinion in what is heard.

Speaking

- Plan and deliver a variety of oral presentations.
- Edit oral presentations for effectiveness.
- Demonstrate awareness of audience when planning and delivering an oral presentation.

Writing

- Develop narrative (telling about something), expository (explaining), persuasive and technical writings.
- Plan and organize ideas for writing.
- Choose and use effective vocabulary words.
- Expand sentences for meaning and clarity.
- Revise and edit writing through self-evaluation and discussion with others.
- Write and publish in a variety of forms including stories, poems, plays, reports, essays and research projects.
- Use writing skills in all subject areas to increase understanding and to communicate.
- Select and evaluate information from various sources and communicate it to others.
- Continue to use good literature to enhance personal writing style.
- Adjust language used in writing according to purpose and audience (formal and informal language).
- Write for extended periods of time.
- Use available technology.

Research

- Apply previously learned research skills and knowledge to identify and organize information from various sources.
- Use note-taking skills.
- Compare information sources for specific research projects and purposes.
- Use technology to locate books, materials and other sources.
- Communicate research in written and oral presentations.

Sample PACT Question

Unexpected Gifts

Mrs. McKenzie smiled as she finished dusting the living room. She loved the old farmhouse just outside of town where she had lived for almost 40 years. Although her youngest daughter, Tasha, had asked her many times to move into town, Mrs. McKenzie did not want to move. She had raised her children here and every room held a happy memory.

"I'm glad Tasha cares enough to worry," thought Mrs. McKenzie as she put on her favorite dress. Her family was gathering at Tasha's house in town at 11:00 this morning to have lunch together.

Driving into town, Mrs. McKenzie admired the beautiful red tulips growing around the sign that marked the city limits. In a few minutes, she pulled up in front of Tasha's house. "Grandma!" shouted Ryan, Tasha's youngest son, running toward the car. Ryan and Mrs. McKenzie's eight other grandchildren surrounded Mrs. McKenzie and led her into the house. Tasha, her husband Raúl, and Mrs. McKenzie's son and other daughter, along with their spouses, greeted her with hugs and kisses.

On their dining room table was a lavish buffet lunch with ham, turkey, six different salads, three kinds of bread and a three-layered cake decorated with real flowers.

As the family gathered, Tasha set a small box in front of Mrs. McKenzie. "I can't wait any longer to give this to you," said Tasha excitedly. "I found it, but it's from all of us."

Mrs. McKenzie opened the box and gasped. Inside was a brooch set with small rubies and diamonds, identical to the one that had belonged to her grandmother. Mrs. McKenzie had sold her grandmother's jewelry years ago to help Tasha pay for college.

"How did you ever find this?" Mrs. McKenzie asked.

"I spotted it in a pawnshop window," Tasha replied, "and I had to get it for you. I know how much Grandma Jeanne's brooch meant to you."

Tears filled Mrs. McKenzie's eyes. "This one means even more to me," she smiled. "But nothing could be more precious to me than all of you," added Mrs. McKenzie. Then she blinked away her tears and said briskly, "Now, let's cut that wonderful cake."

It was raining hard when Mrs. McKenzie put on her coat to go home.

"Oh, Mama," said Tasha. "I wish you didn't have to go back to that lonely farmhouse. Why don't you stay over tonight?"

"Now, Tasha, you know I like to sleep in my own bed," replied Mrs. McKenzie gently. She kissed everyone good-bye and dashed for her car.

When Mrs. McKenzie reached the sign at the edge of town, she noticed a large dog sitting next to the tulips. "Why is it sitting there in the rain?" she wondered. Looking closely, Mrs. McKenzie saw that the dog was tied to the signpost.

"Who would do such a thing?" muttered Mrs. McKenzie, outraged. She stopped her car and got out.

The dog licked her hand as she untied the rope, detaching it from the sign. A soggy note was tied to the dog's collar. Mrs. McKenzie read, "This is a fine dog, but I can no longer keep him. Please give him a good home."

SCIENCE

Students will be able to:

Inquiry and Process Skills

- Make observations of objects and events, distinguishing between qualitative and quantitative observations.
- Arrange data in sequential order and use scientific and dichotomous keys for classification.
- Select and use appropriate tools, units of measurement and technology to collect data.
- Make inferences and predictions based on prior knowledge and observable patterns, and discriminate among observations, inferences and predictions.
- Design and conduct scientific investigations, identifying the independent, dependent and controlled variables, and collecting, recording, organizing, analyzing and interpreting data.
- Identify and implement the four stages of problem solving: identify the problem; design a solution or product; implement the design; and evaluate to see if the design meets the needs of the identified problem.
- Investigate and describe factors that affect product design, risk versus benefit factors and constraints on technological designs.

Life Science

- Classify organisms as single-celled or multi-cellular, and describe the major processes within a cell.
- Observe, compare and contrast the structure and functions of different cells, tissues, organs and organ systems.
- Classify living organisms according to similarities in structure using a dichotomous key.
- Investigate the major human body systems, how they work together, common diseases and compare human body systems to other animals.
- Compare and contrast sexual and asexual reproduction, investigate the genetics and heredity of organisms, including inherited and learned behavior.
- Investigate populations of organisms and the function they serve in an ecosystem (producer, consumer, decomposer, predator and prey).
- Distinguish between populations and communities, habitats and niches, ecosystem and biome.

Earth Science

- Investigate and examine how the Earth's surface is constantly changed by weathering, erosion, deposition and human impact.
- Investigate the major landform regions of South Carolina.
- Investigate soil properties and human effects on soil.
- Investigate groundwater, surface water, runoff and watersheds.
- Evaluate the effects of humans on air, water and land, and the benefits of solid waste management (reduce, reuse and recycle).

Physical Science

- Investigate chemical reactions and distinguish between physical and chemical properties and changes.
- Identify chemical symbols and formulas of common substances such as H_2O (water) and CO_2 (carbon dioxide).

Sample PACT Questions

PACT questions are not available for distribution at this time.

Activities:

Have your child:

- Bake a cake and discuss the physical and chemical changes that took place during the process.
- Visit a zoo or aquarium and observe animal and plant environments. Discuss how the organisms interact with each other.
- Identify examples of chemical and physical changes in your home or environment such as rusting, food spoilage, and freezing and thawing of water.

Books:

- Alcock, Vivien. *The Monster Garden.*
- Bjork, Christina. *Elliot's Extraordinary Cookbook.*
- Bosse, Malcolm. *Deep Dream of the Rain Forest.*
- Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring.*
- The EarthWorks Group. *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do To Save the Earth.*
- George, Jean Craighead. *The Talking Earth.*
- Steig, William. *Gorky Rises.*
- Stewart, Melissa. *Life Without Light.*

Websites:

- Cells Alive – www.cellsalive.com
- Chem4Kids – www.chem4kids.com/
- EPA for Kids – www.epa.gov/enfiroed
- Learning Network Parent Channel – www.familyeducation.com
- National Geographic Kids Site – www.nationalgeographic.com/kids
- National Parent Information Network – www.npin.org
- Science Made Simple – www.sciencemadesimple.com
- South Carolina ETV's Resources for Teachers, Students and Parents – www.knowitall.org
- The Discovery Channel Online – www.discovery.com/online.html
- The Smithsonian Institution – www.si.edu

SOCIAL STUDIES

Contemporary World Regions

Students will be able to:

History: Time, Continuity and Change

- Explain the transformations in Asia, Africa and European societies, and identify the major social and cultural development in the world.
- Describe the growth of nations.
- Understand causes of world conflicts and significance of revolutionary periods.
- Examine communism, political democracy, social justice and totalitarian states.
- Explain how science has changed culture in our world.

Government/Political Science: Power, Authority and Governance

- Describe the purposes of government.
- Identify how nations and states are organized and how they interact.
- Describe how the United States influences other countries and how other countries influence the United States.
- Compare and contrast shared powers and parliamentary systems as means of organizing constitutional governments.
- Explain the differences and similarities of limited and unlimited governments.
- Define and distinguish co-federal, federal and unitary systems of government.

Geography: People, Places and Environments

- Make and use maps, globes, graphs, charts and models.
- Describe the physical characteristics of each world cultural region.
- Understand population density, population growth.
- Identify and compare the cultural characteristics of each world region.
- Explain how physical environments limit and define human activity.
- Show how people interact with their environment to create distinctive regions.
- Understand the impact of human migration or cultural diffusion, change and conflict in each world region.
- Explain how people of different cultural backgrounds understand places.
- Describe how conflict and cooperation affect the political, social and economic system in each world region.

Economics: Production, Distribution and Consumption

- Explain how scarcity and choice affect the development of less-developed regions.
- List how government spending and taxes affect the world.
- Explain how governments raise revenue.
- Describe the roles of supply and demand as they relate to needs and wants of consumers and markets.
- Define gross domestic product and per capita gross domestic product.
- Distinguish between domestic and global trade.

Sample PACT Questions

PACT questions are not available for distribution at this time.

Activities:

Have your child:

- Watch and discuss the local and national news.
- Visit the State Museum in Columbia to see the origins of the South Carolina society and how it has changed over the years.
- Read a local and a state newspaper.
- Use the Internet to find information from and about foreign countries.
- Review his/her textbook with you.
- Visit Charleston and the downtown area to see the influence of the English and Irish on the society and the architecture.
- Investigate the origin of your family name.

Books:

- Filipovic, Zlata. *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo.*
- Frank, Anne. *Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl.*
- Gordan, Sheila. *Waiting for the Rain: A Novel of South Africa.*
- Siegal, Aranka. *Upon the Head of the Goat.*
- Watkins, Yoko K. *So Far from the Bamboo Grove.*
- *World Almanac*
- *World Atlas*

Websites:

- United States Holocaust Museum – www.usholocaustmuseum.com
- South Carolina Dept of Education – www.myscschools.com
- National Geographic – www.nationalgeographic.com
- Jewish Defense League www.jdl.org –
- Zurich, Switzerland – www.twenj.com/swisdest.htm#Zurich
- Live Shots of the Panama Canal – www.pancanal.com/eng/photo/camera-java.html

"We'll find you a home somewhere," said Mrs. McKenzie, leading the dog back to her car. Opening the back door, she patted the seat and said "Hop in, boy!" The dog eagerly jumped into the car.

When Mrs. McKenzie got home, she led the dog through the back door into the kitchen. "Sit! Stay!" she commanded. To her grateful surprise, the dog stayed in the kitchen.

Mrs. McKenzie bathed the dog in a deep old-fashioned bathtub. She had to mop the entire floor when she was done. The dog stood gazing at her the entire time with large brown eyes.

Finally Mrs. McKenzie sat resting in her favorite chair in the living room. The dog was sleeping near her feet, its still-damp fur drying to a lovely golden brown color. Mrs. McKenzie reached down to pet him, and the dog lifted his head and nuzzled her leg. Mrs. McKenzie sat thinking for a moment before she picked up the telephone on the table next to her chair and started dialing.

"Hello Tasha? I just wanted you to know that you won't have to worry about me from now on. I'm not living alone anymore. I have a dog!"

Adapted from the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

Mrs. McKenzie made the statement, "This means even more to me." when she received the brooch at her party. Explain what she meant by this. Write your answer using 3 or 4 complete sentences.

_____

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Activities:

- Encourage your child to keep a journal and write for extended periods of time.
- Encourage your child to write letters or send e-mail to family and friends.
- Tell stories to your child about your childhood and life experiences.
- Have your child read a newspaper or magazine article and summarize what he/she read.
- Have your child analyze advertisements on television or in magazines. Determine the persuasive techniques used.
- Reward your child with books or a journal.
- Get your child a library card and regularly go to the library or bookstore.
- When watching television or a video, discuss the conflict in the episode.
- Discuss the point of view of a character.
- Discuss how a problem was solved.
- Read aloud to your child.
- Allow your child to read and write, JUST FOR FUN!

Books:

- Bloor, Edward. *Tangerine.*
- Coman, Carolyn. *What Jamie Saw.*
- Fleishman, Paul. *Bull Run.*
- Lowry, Lois. *The Giver.*
- Paulsen, Gary. *My Life in Dog Years.*
- Wolff, Virginia Euwer. *Bat 6.*

Websites:

- Children's Literature Website – www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/bestbooks
- Georgia Department of Education – www.glc.k12.ga.us
- Learning Page.com – www.sitesforteachers.com
- Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site – www.carolhurst.com
- Salt Lake County Library – www.slco.lib.ut.us
- Surfing the Net with Kids – www.surfnetkids.com
- United States Department of Education – www.ed.gov.pubs/parents
- South Carolina Department of Education – www.myscschools.com
- National Association for the Education of Young Children – www.naeyc.org
- National Parent Teacher Association – www.pta.org
- National Parent Information Network – www.npin.org

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A collaborative project sponsored by: South Carolina Department of Education, South Carolina Education Oversight Committee, Fall 2001